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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: Djibouti Speaks Out on Darfur

11. (U) The state run newspaper, La Nation, yesterday published a story saying that the Republic of Djibouti will support the Government of Sudan until the Darfur crisis is resolved. The story indicated that the Sudan situation is improving and that progress is being made at the Abuja conference. It opposed Western military intervention inside the Sudanese frontiers.

12. (U) On August 21 the Minister of Information announced Djiboutian support for the Sudanese effort to resolve the Darfur crisis. Since then, the state news agency has been reporting stories favoring the Sudanese government and calling for large scale return of refugees to Darfur.

14. (U) Comment: This may be partly in response to the visit of Rep. Donald Payne paid Djibouti and other countries that share a border with Sudan, as well as the nomination of a new Sudanese Ambassador to Djibouti. Both urged the Djiboutian Government to take an official stand on Darfur. More likely it is a reflection of the Arab League stance on this issue. Djibouti is a member of the Arab League.

15. (U) Comment Continued: There is an ethnically Sudanese community in Djibouti with a long history in the capital. The feeling about Darfur in this community, and in the Djiboutian society as a whole, is that the American government's preoccupation with Sudan parallels its stance toward Saddam before the current Iraqi war.

GRIBBIN